

REMARKS

Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and allowance in view of the foregoing amendments and following remarks. Following entry of these amendments, Claims 40, 43-44, 50-55, 69, 72-76, 85, 91, 97-101, 120, 127, 132, 136-139 and 144-147 will be pending in the application.

In the Office Action, the Examiner rejected Claims 1-4, 6-10, 13-14, 17, 20, 22-29, 32-39, 41-42, 45-48, 56-68, 70, 77-84, 86-89, 92-95, 102-114, 117-119, 121-125, 128-131, 133-134, 140-143, and 148-149 under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by Bantz EPO 0 622 911 A2. Further, the Examiner rejected Claims 5, 11-12, 49, 71, 90, 96, 126 and 135 are rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over the Bantz EP reference. The Examiner rejected Claims 15-16, 18-19, 20-21, 30-31, 115-116 as unpatentable over the Bantz EP reference in view of a U.S. Patent (6,505,037) to Kandala.

In the Office Action, the Examiner indicated that Claims 40, 43-44, 50-55, 69, 72-76, 85, 91, 97-101, 120, 127, 132, 136-139 and 144-147 contain allowable subject matter. The Examiner further noted that these claims would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claims and any intervening claims.

Applicants thank the Examiner for noting the allowable subject matter contained in these objected to claims. Applicants have amended the claims to cancel the claims rejected by the Examiner thus rendering the rejections moot. Applicants also have amended the Claims as suggested by the Examiner such that Claims 40, 43-44, 50-55, 69, 72-73, 85, 91, 97-98, 120, 127, 132, 136-137 and 144 have been rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of their respective former base claims and intervening claims. Additionally, Claims 74-76, 99-101, 138-139 and 145-147 now depend from allowable base claims and intervening claims and applicant believes these dependent claims are allowable.


Therefore, for at least these reasons, Applicants respectfully submit that Claims 40, 43-44, 50-55, 69, 72-76, 85, 91, 97-101, 120, 127, 132, 136-139 and 144-147 are in a condition for allowance, and respectfully request a Notice to that effect.

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All objections and rejections having been addressed, and in view of the foregoing, the claims are believed to be in form for allowance, and such action is hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, s/he is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,
PILLSBURY WINTHROP LLP

By 
Anthony G. Smyth, Reg. No. 55,636
Tel. No.: (650) 233-4802
For David A. Jakopin, Reg. No. 32,995

2475 Hanover Street
Palo Alto, CA 94304-1114

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